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PACIFIC COAST DISCOVERIES

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The Cartographical History of the Pacific Coast of North America is one of vague, shadowy and unstable surmise of long duration.

The views of Columbus and his cotemporaries are best shown in what are known as the La Cosa map and the Ruisch map, which simply delineate very inaccurately a few of the West Indian Islands, a part of the Gulf of Mexico, Florida and the coast line a few hundred miles northward. These maps prevented for a long time after the coming of the Europeans the possibility of the very existence of a Pacific Coast; and I might add, that the Asiatic theory of the new-found lands was maintained with more or less modification for a full century after Columbus. In many of the earliest maps the Pacific Coast was avoided by cutting off the western extension of the new continent by the edge of the sheet, but the confession of an Asiatic belief was still made sometimes in other ways, as when in a certain Portuguese map made between 1516 and 1520 showing Mahometan flags on the coasts of Venezuela and Nicaragua. This map is now being preserved in the Royal Library at Munich. In 1526 a rare book of the Monk Franciscus contained a map which represented South America as a huge island, disjoined from the Asiatic Coast by a strait in the neighborhood of Tehuantepec which as you know is located a little north of the boundary line between Mexico and Guatemala, with the legend "*hoc orbus hemisphaerium cedit regi Hispaniae*" (New Spain extends to this place.) A few years later we find two other maps showing this Asiatic connection, one of which, the Orontius Finaeus Globe, is well known, and is the earliest engraved map showing a return to the ideas of Columbus. This map was made in the year 1531, and was quite extensively circulated. It is formed on a cordiform or heart-shaped projection, and is entitled "*Nova et integra universi orbis descriptio*," (a description of the new-found land.) This map was published quite extensively up to 1572. In 1533 Francis I., in

commissioning Cartier for his exploration, called the St. Lawrence Valley a part of Asia.

The same view is maintained in a manuscript map of Roscelli, the Italian geographer, preserved in the British Museum. At this time it was generally supposed that North America and Europe were united by land. By reference to maps appearing during the latter part of the 15th century, Greenland, then known as Bacallaos, was made a prolongation of Northwestern Europe. A map called the Carta Marina, published by Gostaldi at Venice in 1543, shows most clearly the prevailing theories as to the overland connection with both Asia and Europe, as well as a designation of geographical and political divisions on this continent. About the year 1550 we find the first objection to the Asiatic theory by Gostaldi, who only two years earlier made the Carta Marina map above described. In his second map he disjoined the Western Coast of America from the Asiatic by a narrow strait. This theory was followed by Roscelli (previously referred to,) in 1561.

No discoveries, however, had actually been made up to this time to guide these latter gentlemen, their statements being purely theoretical. Two maps now preserved at Florence which belonged to about the year 1550, show an Asiatic connection, and extend the California Coast to the Ganges. The Italian cartographer, Paul de Furlani, made a map in 1560, which is preserved in the British Museum, and depicts Chinamen and elephants in the region of the Mississippi Valley.

A land connection with Asia is again adhered to by Johannes Myritus in a map drawn by him in 1587. In 1590 Livio Sanuto loudly disputed the Asiatic theory on the ground that the Mexicans would not have shown surprise at horses in Cortes' time if they formerly had been inhabitants of a continent like Asia, where horses are common. The latest use of the type of map shown in the Carta Marina was just a half century later, viz., in 1598. The belief, however, still lingered for many years in some quarters, and Thomas Morton, in 1636, showed that in New England it was not yet decided whether the continent of America did not border upon the country of the Tartars. Indeed, the last trace of this theory was not blown away until Behring, in 1728, passed from the Pacific to the Arctic Sea.

Such in brief is the history of the inception and decline of the

belief in the prolongation of Asia over against this Western Coast. And, as has been suspected by geographers at intervals since the time of Erastosthenes, third century, B .C., who accepted the spherical theory and had advanced the identical notion which nearly 1700 years later impelled Columbus to his voyage. The beginning of the decline of such belief is traced to the movements of Cortes. Balboa in 1513 by his discovery of the South Sea, later to be called the Pacific Ocean, which name was given to it by Magellan in 1520, had established the continental form of South America, whose limits southward were fixed by Magellan, but it was left for Cortes to It may be interesting to note right here that the Portuguese had pushed on eastward beyond the great peninsula of India and had reached the Moluccas in 1511, where they satisfied themselves begin the exploration to the North which Behring consummated. there was a long space intervening yet before they would confront the Spaniards pursuing their westerly route. The voyage of Magellan, as we shall see, seems to bring the solution near. and if we may believe Scotto, the Genoese geographer, at about the same date, 1520, the Portuguese had crossed the Pacific easterly and struck our Northwest Coast. A new understanding between the rival crowns of Spain and Portugal closed the question rather abruptly through a sale in 1529 by Spain to Portugal of all her rights to the Moluccas for 350,000 ducats; this was known as the treaty of Saragossa. Cortes on his return from Spain, in 1530, resolved to push his discoveries up the coast. The Spaniards now occupied Theuantepec, Acapulco and Zacatula on the sea, and Spaniards were also to be found at Caliacan, just within the Gulf of California on its eastern shore. Up to this time the Spaniards had not succeeded in developing the coast farther north than the Gulf of California; and here Cortes' discoveries on the Pacific Coast ends; for Mendoza, the newly-appointed Viceroy, had visions of his own, and thwarted him in all his subsequent attempts, till finally Cortes himself went to Spain. The name which Cortes Captains gave to the gulf, "the Sea of Cortes," failed to abide. It grew to be generally called the "Red Sea," out of some fancied resemblance to the Red Sea of the Old World. This appellation was supplanted in turn by the name of California, which it is contended, was given to the peninsula by Cortes himself. The origin of the name, however, has been a cause of dispute. Prof. Jules Marcou claims that it was

simply a designation used by Cortes to distinguish a land which we now know to be the hottest in the two Americas, Tierra California, derived from Calida Forna, meaning "fiery furnace." Bancroft points out a variety of equivalent derivations.

Edward E. Hale, in 1862, traced the name to a romance published it is supposed, in 1510, which might easily enough have been a popular book with the Spanish followers of Cortes. In this romance a certain Emperor of the Greeks defends Constantinople against the infidels of the East. A pagan Queen of Amazons brings an army of Amazons to the succor of the infidels. This imaginary Queen is named Calafia, and her kingdom is called California, a name possibly derived from Calif, which to the readers of such a book would be associated with the East. California in the romance is represented as an island rich with gold and diamonds and pearls. That this name as an omen of wealth struck the fancy of Cortes is the theory of Dr. Hale, who adds "that as a western pioneer now gives the name of Eden to his new home, so Cortes called his new discovery California." It was not until 1542 that an effort was made to reach farther north than what is now Lower California. At this time Cabrillo, a Portuguese in the Spanish service, explored the coast as far as 44 degrees north, which would take us to about the boundary line between Washington and Oregon. Thus from the time Balboa discovered the Pacific the Spanish had taken 30 years to develop the coast northerly to the latitude of Oregon. In this distance they had found nothing of the Straits of Anian, which, if Humbolt is correct, had begun to take form in people's minds ever since Cortereal in 1500 had supposed Hudson's Straits to be the easterly entrance of a westerly passage. The earliest maps up to as late a date as 1757 showed California to be an island.

Companius, in speaking of California, remarked about 1694, that it is the largest island which the Spaniards possess in America. And it was not until 1750 that California was at last defined in its real geographical relations. The lingering suspicion of the northerly connection of the California Gulf with the ocean had now nearly vanished; and the peninsula which had been an island under Cortes, then for nearly a century connected with the main land, and then again for more than a century in many minds an island

again, was at last defined as we now know it. The coast line, however, long remained shadowy in a higher latitude.

EARLIEST MAPS AND CONSECUTIVE DATES.

La Cosa, year 1500; Ruysch, 1508; The Pacific, 1513; Homen, 1540; Castilles, 1541; Cabot, 1544; Carta Marina, 1548; Ptolemy, 1548; Martines, 1555—the first to give complete outline of coast; Paule de Furlani, 1574; Sir Humphrey Gilbert, 1576.

Sir Francis Drake visited the Coast, including Oregon, as early as 1579, and claimed the country for England under the name of New Albion.